

## **Regional Public Library Systems**

### **Types of Regions**

Twelve regional public library systems have been designated by the Minnesota Department of Education. They were established by the Minnesota State Board of Education in the late 1970's. Most of the system boundaries correspond very closely with economic development regions. Because of the flexibility of Minnesota Statutes 134.20, no two system boards are established in exactly the same way. Each system has a system contract or agreement that has been signed by all participating entities. Each signatory has agreed to the methods of governance which usually involves appointees of the county commissioners from the signatory counties, and/or representatives of various cities with libraries. The regional systems eligible for regional library basic system support grants are of three types: Consolidated, Federated, or Federated with centralized services

1. **Consolidated:** A consolidated regional public library system provides direct library services to the public. The participating cities and counties provide the funding and all libraries are branches of the system. It is governed by a board representative of the participating cities and counties. There usually is a single budget. The system provides administration, staff, library materials, library automation, and all other services necessary for public library operations in the region. The participating cities and counties appoint members to the regional public library board. The consolidated regional public library systems are:
  - East Central Regional Library
  - Great River Regional Library
  - Kitchigami Regional Library
  - Lake Agassiz Regional Library
  - Northwest Regional Library
  - Pioneerland Library System.
  
2. **Federated:**
  - a. **Purely federated:** provides services to member libraries and no direct service to the public. Participating member city and county public libraries in the system remain autonomous with their own budgets, staff and boards. This type is governed by a board representative of member libraries, and receives no funding from cities or counties. It is eligible to receive state and federal funds to support system programs and services. Purely federated Minnesota library regions are:
    - Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)
  
  - b. **Federated with centralized services:** a variation on the two previous types. It provides shared services, including library automation, to autonomous participating member libraries. In addition to state and federal funds, it may receive local funds from counties to provide services directly to the public such as bookmobile(s), or Mail-a-Book operations. It is governed by a board that is representative of member libraries and counties within the region. Federated library regions with centralized services are:
    - Arrowhead Library System
    - Plum Creek Library System
    - Southeastern Libraries Cooperating (SELCO)
    - Traverse des Sioux Library System
    - Viking Library System